THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the 88th meeting of Permanent Indus Commission, held at Islamabad during 4th-6th February, 2003, Pakistan Commissioner insisted on discussing the questions framed by Pakistan on the Baglihar Hydroelectric Plant under the provision of the Treaty dealing with settlement of differences and disputes, which *inter-alia* also provides for the appointment of a Neutral Expert. The Indian Commissioner was, however, of the view that stage had not yet reached to discuss the issue under that provision of the Treaty. The Indian Commissioner, during the meeting suggested to discuss Pakistan's objections on the design of the Plant so as to resolve them amicably. The meeting concluded with both sides maintaining their respective points of view.

(c) The decision of Pakistan regarding the appointment of a Neutral Expert has not been communicated to India so far.

(d) Does not arise.

Completion of Polavaram Project

3380. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA:
SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO :

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State of Andhra Pradesh requested to help in completion of Polavaram Multi-purpose Project;

(b) whether a suggestion has been made to entrust this work to a private agency;

(c) whether on completion of this project people of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh will be greatly helped; and

(d) if so, the case of delay in completion of this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a), (b) and (d)The Polavaram Multipurpose Project of Government of Andhra Pradesh has not yet been cleared for investment clearance for want of resolution of inter-State issues and submission of remaining chapters of the detailed Project Report by the State Government for techno-economic appraisal by the Central appraising agencies. Irrigation being a State subject, the

responsibility of planning, investigation, funding alongwith priority, execution, operation and maintenance of irrigation projects, including irrigation and flood control primarily rests with the concerned State governments themselves.

(c) The Project envisages to provide annual irrigation to an area of 436.8 thousand hectare spread over East Godavari, Vishakhapatnam, Krishna and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

Fund allocated for erosion of Ganga-Padma river basin

3381. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether government are aware of heavy erosion of Ganga-Padma river basin;

(b) whether government recognise the problem as national calamity;

(c) the amount Government of West Bengal has demanded to deal with the problem; and

(d) the amount sanctioned by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY): (a) Yes, Sir. The erosion in banks of Ganga/Padma is a natural phenomenon being a meandering river. The intensity of erosion varies with location and also from year to year.

(b) Flood Management including river erosion being a State subject, investigation, planning and implementation of flood management schemes, are within the purview of the State Govt.The Central Government renders assistance which are technical, catalytical and promotional in nature.

(c) In 1996, the Planning Commission had appointed an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri G. R. Keskar. the then Member, Central Water Commission to study bank erosion,peroblem in Ganga/ Padma river in the districts of Malda and Murshidabad in West Bengal. The committee had recommended various short-term and long-term measures. The Government of West Bengal had requested during 2001 to release Central Grant of Rs.139.5 crore for short-term schemes to be executed by Govt, of West Bengal.